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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 002979

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Moussaoui Trial NATO
Expansion Conference Bolivia Nationalization - Energy Mini-
Summit
PARIS - Friday, May 05, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Moussaoui Trial
NATO Expansion Conference
Bolivia Nationalization - Energy Mini-Summit

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

The Moussaoui trial and verdict elicit several commentaries, all underscoring the victory of justice over vengeance and pointing to the growing debate in the U.S. on the death penalty. In Le Monde the editorial concludes with the Guantanamo detainees, who, contrary to Moussaoui, are "deprived the right to defend themselves in a court of law." In Le Figaro a report explains that for the Pentagon, "the verdict proves that severity is best ensured with a military tribunal rather than a civilian one." (See Part C) La Croix titles on its front page: "Justice Has Prevailed Over Vengeance" and its inside article analyzes how "juries are no longer convinced of the effectiveness of the death penalty." Gilles BIASSETTE of La Croix drafts a profile of Moussaoui's public defender, Gerald Zerkin who calls the trial "the trial of a lifetime." But Liberation, which "salutes" the verdict in one report, devotes a second story to the "supermax" prison where Moussaoui will be "entombed alive." An echo to the weekly column by Pierre Marcelle who says "Moussaoui's fate is worse than death."

The Clearstream scandal continues to make headlines: for Liberation, the affair is "Interminable" while Le Figaro begins to give slightly less importance to the story. Its main front-page story is devoted to "France's Nuclear of the Future," and right below the fold a second story reads: "Villepin Resists" in reference to his 10th press conference yesterday, where he reiterated his intention to "stay the course." But communist l'Humanite interviews Denis Robert, the journalist who was the first one to investigate Clearstream's practices. "The anonymous finger pointer is not the worst part of the scandal. Clearstream serves as an international clearinghouse not only for occult financial deals, but also legal ones. Everyone wants to believe that Clearstream is a collateral victim, but I have proof that Enron accounts have gone through Clearstream as well as those of banks which deal closely with terrorism." Liberation's editorial analyzes the repercussions of the scandal on the presidential elections: "Will April 21st, 2007 be the reverse of 2002? Will it be Le Pen against the Socialists.? To Le Pen's great joy, Villepin and Sarkozy could well end up as the last of Chirac's hunting trophies, a Chirac who, when he leaves the Elysee Palace will have managed to dissolve all his heirs. (Not just the National Assembly.)"

Bolivia's nationalization of foreign oil and energy companies is Liberation's second lead story entitled "The Left Has Energy." The editorial analyzes the new "Latin American policy" and the "huge gap" between rich and poor. (See Part C)

Le Figaro reports that VP Cheney was very critical of the Kremlin yesterday in Vilnius at an international conference on the future of NATO's EU expansion. (See Part C)

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Moussaoui Trial

"Moussaoui Spared"
Left-of-center Le Monde in its unsigned editorial (05/04):
"By deciding against the death penalty, the jury did not fall into the trap set by both the prosecution and the accused. President Bush did not expand on the verdict . which is a reversal for the administration that was asking for the death penalty. The jury's refusal to inflict the death penalty proves not only the prosecution's weakness, but also the magnitude of the American public's doubts

about the death penalty, today. The trial and its outcome, despite or because of Moussaoui's provocation, are exemplary. The American justice system has demonstrated it is capable of trying fairly the most odious of individuals. This makes even more untenable the fate of hundreds of Guantanamo detainees who are deprived by the U.S. government of their right to defend themselves before a jury."

"A Precedent in the 'Anti-Terrorist War'"

Philippe Gelie in right-of-center Le Figaro (05/05): "The Moussaoui trial, in the Bush administration's war against terror, was the exception to the rule. The testimony of Khalid Sheik Mohamed, who is detained by the CIA in a secret prison, stands as proof of the paradox behind the

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legal battle waged by the Bush administration, an extension of its war on terror: phantom detainees, prisons held outside the law, some Martial Courts but few trials worthy of that name. Moussaoui's trial had the look of normality in the face of a justice of exception. Yet the leniency of the verdict could well reinforce the Bush administration in the belief that the legal system is not adapted to try 'enemy combatants.' Meanwhile, the Pentagon stubbornly forges ahead with its exceptional procedures in Guantanamo. What will Washington do with the other 350 'enemy combatants?' The Moussaoui trial might have set the course for a return to legality. But the verdict proves that severity is best ensured with a military tribunal rather than a civilian one."

"Justice"

Dominique Quinio in Catholic La Croix (05/05): "Contrary to what Moussaoui said upon hearing his verdict, America has won, not lost. The law has won over vengeance, despite the horror that befell the Americans on 9/11 and despite Moussaoui's stubbornness and satisfaction in claiming responsibility. Yet the life sentence, which has been inflicted on him, is a terrible verdict. His lawyers' task will be to bring him back to France where life imprisonment is not possible. This trial was so exceptional that it is difficult to draw conclusions on the debate over the death penalty in the U.S. Abolitionists in the U.S. are making headway. and the death penalty is indeed receding. Meanwhile, the entire country can show the world that in this trial where the rights of everyone were respected, justice has been done."

"A Fate Worse than Death"

Pierre Marcelle in left-of-center Liberation (05/05): "This is a bitter victory indeed. The commentaries, which laud Moussaoui's life sentence, look obscene in light of a fate worse than death. Surprisingly enough there are few opponents to the war in Iraq among those who extol the virtues of this verdict. Iraq, where military wardens torture more humanely than lay juries. Moussaoui, short of a serious medical condition, may well spend half a century without exchanging a glance or a word with another human being. The condemned will surely go crazy and this will be an almost perfect crime. Some will say he was crazy to begin with. Meanwhile, what does the French legal system have to say about a case that should fall under its jurisdiction?"

NATO Expansion Conference

"In Vilnius, an Anti-Putin Front"

Fabrice Node-Langlois in right-of-center Le Figaro (05/05): "In the air floated the scent of a new Cold War. Dick Cheney had never been so virulent against Putin's government. promising to bring up a host of controversial topics at the G8 in Saint Petersburg. Cheney also said that Belarus 'does not have its place in Europe.' While most European countries sent ministry level representatives, France, which believes that it is counterproductive to irritate Moscow, chose to adopt a low profile by sending a lower ranking official."

Bolivia Nationalization - Energy Mini-Summit

"A Huge Gap"

Pierre Haski in left-of-center Liberation (05/05): "The idea of Latin America shifting to the left and breaking with an IMF version of ultraliberalism, source of injustice and inequalities, is enticing. Bolivia's nationalization policy is a symbol of such a shift. Regional summits like those with Castro and Chavez, and coming elections in Peru and Mexico feed this perception of a pink or even red South America. Yet all left-leaning South American governments are not alike. And today, the difference lies in the fact that globalization has passed through these nations. It is remarkable that the first victim of Bolivia's nationalization is a public company from neighboring Brazil, run by left-leaning Lula. But the success of radical left parties is the result of the failures of more

liberal regimes, which have made the huge gap between rich and poor even greater. The telltale signs of success or failure will be in the social progress achieved by the new leaders. In Venezuela, outside the advances made in the energy sector, the rest is insignificant. Beyond the anti-imperialist rhetoric, this is where the test lies. If indeed these new policies are successful, the repercussions will travel very far, as far as Washington, which is looking at what is developing in its backyard with dismay."

STAPLETON